

Message Text

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ACTION AF-10

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 EUR-12 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-04 H-01
 INR-07 L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01 PRS-01 SP-02
 SS-15 USIA-06 /068 W
 -----088737 080004Z /62

R 071519Z JUL 77
FM AMEMBASSY PRETORIA
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 7995
INFO AMCONSUL CAPE TOWN
AMCONSUL DURBAN
AMCONSUL JOHANNESBURG

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E.O. 11652: N/A
TAGS: PINT, SF
SUBJECT: PROGRESSIVE-REFORM PARTY AND UNITED PARTY REBELS
AGREE TO FORM NEW PARTY

REF: PRETORIA 3303,

1. SUMMARY: THE PROGRESSIVE-REFORM PARTY AND THE UNITED PARTY REBELS LED BY MP JAPIE BASSON HAVE AGREED TO FORM A NEW OPPOSITION PARTY WHICH WILL BASE ITS PLATFORM ON THE KOWIE MARAIS COMMITTEE'S FOURTEEN POINTS. END SUMMARY.

2. THE PROGRESSIVE-REFORM PARTY (PRP) AND THE SIX FORMER UNITED PARTY MP'S AND THEIR FOLLOWERS WHO LEFT THE UP RATHER THAN JOIN ITS REINCRANATION, THE NEW REPUBLIC PARTY (NRP) (REFTL), ANNOUNCED JULY 6 AN AGREEMENT TO FORM A NEW OPPOSITION PARTY. REPRESENTATIVES OF THE TWO GROUPS, WHICH HAD BEGUN MERGER NEGOTIATIONS THE DAY THE NRP FORMED (JUNE 29), WILL DRAFT A PROPOSED PARTY CONSTITUTION BASED ON KOWIE MARAIS COMMITTEE'S FOURTEEN PRINCIPLES (PRETORIA 218). THE NEW PARTY WILL PROBABLY BE
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FORMALLY ESTABLISHED AFTER A MEETING OF THE PRP EXECUTIVE AGUUST 6 ADOPTS THE CONSTITUTION. THE PRESS SPECULATED THAT THE NEW PARTY WOULD BE NAMED THE PROGRESSIVE REPUBLICAN PARTY.

3. TRANSVAAL NATIONAL PARTY LEADER AND INTERIOR MINISTER CONNIE MULDER COMMENTED THAT THIS LATEST SHIFT "HONESTLY ARRANGES THE OPPOSITION FOR THE FIRST TIME" SINCE THE

THREE OPPOSITION PARTIES ARE NOW DIVIDED ALONG IDEOLOGICAL LINES. MULDER CLAIMED THAT IF THE NEW PARTY WAS TO BE POLITICALLY SIGNIFICANT IT WOULD HAVE TO BACK AN EQUAL, UNQUALIFIED FRANCHISE FOR ALL IN ONE PARLIAMENT. IF IT DIDN'T, HE SAID, IT WOULD BE POLITICALLY DISHONEST. IF IT DID, IT WOULD ONLY HAVE THE SUPPORT OF A SMALL SEGMENT OF THE WHITE POPULATION AND NO CHANCE OF MAJOR ELECTORAL SUCCESS.

4. COMMENT: THE DIVISION OF THE OPPOSITION ALONG IDEOLOGICAL LINES AND THE HARD LINE THAT PARTY LEADERS ARE TAKING ON POSSIBLE MERGERS BODE ILL FOR THE CHANCES OF FORMING A UNITED OPPOSITION IN THE NEAR FUTURE. AS A RESULT, ALL THREE OPPOSITION PARTIES (NRP, PRP, SAP) WILL LIKELY SPEND THE NEXT FEW MONTHS ATTEMPTING TO RECRUIT POTENTIAL DEFECTORS FROM EACH OTHER, DOING THEIR UTMOST TO WIN BY-ELECTIONS TO PROVE THEIR POPULAR STRENGTH, AND SEEKING WIDE-RANGING POPULAR SUPPORT IN PREPARATION FOR THE PARLIAMENTARY ELECTIONS SCHEDULED FOR LATE 1978 OR EARLY 1979.
BOWDLER

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Message Attributes

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Control Number: n/a
Copy: SINGLE
Sent Date: 07-Jul-1977 12:00:00 am
Decaption Date: 01-Jan-1960 12:00:00 am
Decaption Note:
Disposition Action: RELEASED
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Case Number: n/a
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